

# St John's Church of England Primary School, Tisbury

Weaveland Road, Tisbury, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP3 6HJ

## Inspection dates

1–2 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The achievement of pupils when they leave the school at the end of key stage 2 is not high enough in writing or mathematics.
- Teaching in upper key stage 2 is not allowing pupils, particularly middle-ability pupils, to make the progress of which they are capable. This is because expectations are not high enough.
- The attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- Teachers are not yet fully familiar with the school's new assessment system. This hinders their ability to intervene quickly to support pupils who fall behind.
- Pupils are not consistently using the feedback they receive from teachers to improve their work.
- Although the school has benefited from the work of governors and external advisers, they have not provided sufficient challenge to raise achievement at the end of key stage 2.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is providing strong leadership and developing the capacity of other staff, including middle leaders. As a result, the school is rapidly improving in many respects.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. This is because they are well supported by the nurturing, inclusive school culture and strong pastoral care.
- The headteacher values the support provided by the local authority. She has been helped to identify key priorities and improve aspects of the school's work.
- The quality of teaching in lower key stage 2, key stage 1 and early years is improving. As a result, pupils are achieving higher outcomes.
- Early years provision is good. Children make good progress because they are well taught and supported. Staff know the children well and take account of their needs to remove barriers to learning.
- Governors are committed to the school and provide stable leadership. This has helped the headteacher to establish herself in her role and make rapid improvements in a short time.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement by ensuring that:
  - teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve in upper key stage 2
  - pupils take pride in their work and improve presentation at key stage 2
  - pupils with middle prior attainment in upper key stage 2 are provided with work that heightens their interest and deepens their thinking
  - teachers become more familiar with the new assessment system and use it to monitor progress closely so that they can take early action when pupils fall behind
  - pupils consistently use the feedback provided by staff to improve their work
  - teaching assistants are trained to help pupils develop self-sufficiency and discover answers for themselves.
- Improve the quality of leadership by ensuring that governors and those providing external support increase the level of challenge in order to raise achievement at the end of key stage 2.
- Improve the quality of behaviour by ensuring that action continues to be taken to improve the attendance of the minority of persistently absent pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher leads with passion and conviction. She has integrity and firmly believes that every child deserves a good education. As such, she has concentrated her efforts on 'building the school from the bottom upwards'. This is because she believes that pupils' learning requires a firm foundation. Her integrity and clarity of purpose prompt her to resist superficial quick-fixes.
- The headteacher has galvanised the staff and raised morale, such is her openness, sincerity and infectious desire to put the children first. She has high expectations of staff and pupils, which is helping to improve the quality of teaching.
- Middle leaders are developing in their role. This is because the headteacher trusts them to take responsibility and exercise initiative in their work. Middle leaders welcome this. They say that they feel empowered and thrive on the professional challenge. Because leadership is being shared among the staff, capacity for further development has been created.
- The leadership of teaching is improving because the headteacher is taking a more robust approach to managing the performance of teachers. She has raised expectations of staff so that they are increasingly aware of the link between the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. She is unafraid to have difficult conversations when performance is not good enough. Equally, however, the headteacher provides training and support matched to the needs of staff. As a result, staff report that they are developing professionally and that leaders invest in their careers.
- The curriculum is designed to interest and excite pupils. Staff believe in the creative, exploratory nature of the curriculum, which intertwines different subject disciplines and approaches to learning. The same topics and themes are studied by all pupils across year groups. This encourages learning to be seen as more of a communal activity that crosses age boundaries. The curriculum is supported by various extra-curricular activities, such as homework, mindfulness, board games and various music and sports clubs.
- Additional funding is being used effectively to support the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. A number of vulnerable pupils who face barriers to learning are supported by the 'Griffins class' initiative. Pupils in this class receive tailored support from highly trained emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA) staff. These pupils receive support from dedicated staff, funded by the pupil premium. They are trained to help with social, emotional and behavioural issues so that pupils are more ready to learn.
- The additional sports funding is successfully used to provide pupils with a range of opportunities they would not otherwise have. For example, funding ensures that pupils can take advantage of residential experiences that promote less accessible outdoor sporting activities. Funding is also used to firm up links with the local secondary school. The secondary school releases a member of staff on a weekly basis to organise tournaments at St John's, which increases pupil participation in sport.

- Although strong leadership has brought about many rapid recent improvements, achievement at the end of key stage 2 is not high enough. This is because teaching has not improved sufficiently to secure good outcomes. The weaker teaching can also be attributed to staffing issues in the past. These created instability which had a negative impact on the quality of teaching. These have now been resolved.
- The headteacher has valued the support she has received from external sources, such as the local authority. The school improvement adviser has assisted her in identifying priorities for improvement, brokering support and providing expertise to improve the quality of teaching. This has had a positive impact on many aspects of the school's work. However, external support has not provided the challenge necessary to raise achievement at the end of key stage 2.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school. Nearly all parents who responded to the Parent View survey would recommend the school and agree that the school is well led and managed. All respondents agree that their child is well looked after. An overwhelming majority of respondents agree that their child is happy, safe and well taught.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors bring a range of useful experience and expertise to their roles. Their knowledge and skills have a positive impact on different aspects of the school's work, for example the management of finance and monitoring of safeguarding. They are also closely involved in the shaping of strategic priorities.
- Governors are clear how additional funding is used to support the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. They are able to talk about the positive difference made by the 'Griffins class'. Pupils are helped to develop the confidence and personal skills necessary for learning to develop. In addition, pupils are helped to make more rapid progress in particular subjects.
- Governors have provided a bedrock of support for the headteacher, who has only been in post since September 2015. This support has enabled her to establish herself, and set out her vision and values. Governors have enabled the headteacher to exercise initiative and put her stamp on the school. This has led to some key improvements, particularly in the lower school.
- Although achievement is rising in early years and key stage 1, governors have not provided the necessary challenge to raise achievement at the end of Year 6. This is because expectations of pupils' progress have not been high enough.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, including governors, take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. Staff work closely together and ensure that there is 'hawk-like' oversight of school procedures and checks. Consequently, the checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children are sufficiently robust. Furthermore, staff are clear about the procedures to follow should they have concerns. Any referrals are effectively recorded, monitored and appropriately followed up.

- The designated safeguarding lead works well with external agencies to ensure that children are safe. Information is shared appropriately so that any necessary support is secured in a timely way. She has also cultivated strong relationships with parents so that, if necessary, concerns can be approached in a sensitive and constructive way.
- Staff have been appropriately trained. All staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations with regard to child protection, including radicalisation. Senior staff and governors have received specific recruitment training to ensure that new staff joining the school are suitable to work with children.
- The headteacher has fostered a school culture in which pupils know the importance of looking out for each other and how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils attend assemblies where they are informed about 'stranger danger' and e-safety. Pupils report that they feel safe. One pupil who spoke to the lead inspector said of staff that 'they look after you well.'

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- Teaching in upper key stage 2 is not yet good enough because pupils are not achieving well enough in writing and mathematics. This is because expectations of what some pupils can achieve, particularly middle-ability pupils, are not high enough. The work they are set is not prompting pupils to think at a deeper level.
- Teachers are not yet fully confident in using the school's new assessment system. This is because it has only recently been established. As a result, this limits the ability of teachers to monitor pupils' progress effectively and intervene quickly when pupils fall behind.
- Some pupils are not consistently using informative and helpful feedback provided by teachers to improve their work. This means that some pupils are not in the habit of identifying their mistakes and learning from them to make more rapid progress.
- The work produced by pupils in upper key stage 2 indicates that they are not as fully engaged in the learning process as they should be. Some work, particularly that produced by middle-ability pupils, is not always neatly presented. Graffiti is evident on some front covers, worksheets are roughly pasted in and some pages are 'dog-eared'. Expectations of pupils' presentation are not high enough.
- Pupils throughout the school demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. This is because teachers use their expertise and subject knowledge to plan interesting activities. Staff use a range of resources and approaches to spark pupils' creativity and harness their interest.
- Teaching is improving in early years, key stage 1 and lower key stage 2 because teachers have higher expectations of pupils. Teachers are now better meeting the needs of different groups of pupils. For example, in key stage 1, lower-ability pupils are assisted in their writing by phoneme mats, which help them construct correct words. Other pupils, of higher ability, are provided with checklists that help them to identify the features of good writing in their own work. However, some pupils who spoke to me reported that they did not always feel challenged and would welcome more challenge in certain subjects.

- The work produced by younger pupils shows that they take pride in it because it is well presented. For example, titles are underlined and there is a strong emphasis on neat cursive handwriting. This is helping pupils to become more disciplined and aware of the importance of higher standards.
- Teaching assistants are experienced and well trained. They provide strong support for pupils of different abilities who need to catch up, working with them in different ways, depending on what is appropriate. For example, they might work with pupils in small groups or on a one-to-one basis. These sessions might occur during lessons or outside of the classroom to reinforce or extend key literacy or mathematics skills. However, some teaching assistants are not sufficiently allowing pupils to wrestle with problems to arrive at answers for themselves.
- Parents report that the school provides them with useful information about their child's experience of school and the progress their child is making. They are informed through parents' evenings, informal discussions with staff and written reports. On 'Teacher Tuesdays', parents are invited in to school to look at their child's work. Written reports provide information about progress in different subjects. This information sits alongside comments from the headteacher and pupils' own reflections about their progress. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the reporting process by sharing their views about the report.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and self-assured. Pupils who spoke to the lead inspector happily expressed their largely positive views of the school. When asked what they enjoyed about school, one pupil replied, 'you get to learn things that help you further on in life.'
- The school's culture and values help pupils to be tolerant and respectful of each other. These are supported by staff, who model good relationships. Pupils are encouraged to live the values of 'honesty, responsibility, kindness, perseverance and respect', which the school has identified as its core values.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. Pupils who spoke to me said that they were taught about e-safety. They know that they should be alert to the possibility of people not being who they say they are online. They also know that they should never share their personal details online.
- Pupils feel well looked after. The vast majority of pupils feel that they could speak to a member of staff if worried, although a small number of pupils who responded to the pupil survey did not agree. Pupils who spoke to me said that some classes have a 'worry box', where pupils could write down their concerns which would then be addressed by staff.
- Staff share good relationships with parents. This is because staff ensure that they are accessible and that good communication channels are in place. For example, staff are available for parents to speak to on a daily basis. Furthermore, the headteacher goes out to the school gate with other staff on most mornings to speak to parents.

Consequently, if parents have concerns, staff are able to respond in a timely and meaningful way.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school site. Staff provide a good level of supervision to ensure that pupils are able to play safely at breaktimes.
- The inside learning environment is remarkable and unique. Areas of the school have been transformed to represent different 'worlds'. For example, one area has been decorated to represent the interior of the TARDIS. Another area is an enchanted forest. Within these different areas, children's work and learning displays are used to draw attention to ideas and sources of knowledge. Most importantly, these vibrant, dynamic areas help pupils to associate learning with exciting and magical experiences.
- The attendance of pupils overall is broadly in line with the national average. However, attendance for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. This is because of the persistent absence of a small minority of pupils. Staff work closely and persistently with parents and the educational welfare officer to tackle absence. This work is successful for the most part. However, the attendance of a small number of pupils is still too low.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- In 2016, the overall achievement of pupils in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 was below average and in the bottom 10% of schools. The achievement of pupils with middle prior attainment at the end of Year 6 was also in the bottom 10% of schools in these subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress in writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 in 2016 was in the bottom 10% of schools.
- In 2016, the achievement of children in early years, including those who are disadvantaged, across a range of subjects was lower than average.
- Current pupils in Year 6, particularly middle-ability pupils, are not making the progress they are capable of across a range of subjects. The work they are producing in science is weaker than in other subjects. However, the most able pupils are increasingly experiencing a greater level of challenge in mathematics.
- Current pupils in lower key stage 2, key stage 1 and early years are making better progress across their different subjects. This is because the quality of teaching is improving and teachers have higher expectations of pupils.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school, many of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is improving. Staff are catering for the different needs of pupils, many of whom have low starting points and complex needs. Pupils are provided with appropriate support to ensure that they are ready to learn and are able to access the curriculum.



- Pupils achieve well in reading as they move through the school. Over time, pupils have consistently achieved in line with the national average when they leave the school in Year 6. They also make corresponding progress at key stage 1. In 2016, pupils' achievement in the end of Year 1 phonics check was in line with average. This has shown year-on-year improvement over the last three years.
- In many respects, pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education. There is close communication between the headteacher and staff at the secondary school. This ensures that individuals' needs and requirements can be shared to aid transition. In the case of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, repeated visits are organised to the secondary school to increase familiarity. The coordinator from the secondary school meets with parents and pupils to provide further information and offer reassurance. However, pupils do not start secondary school with sufficiently high achievement in writing and mathematics.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Leadership of early years is good. This is because the coordinator has audited the strengths and weaknesses of provision. This, in turn, has enabled her to develop clear plans for improvement. Consequently, the coordinator has been able to take swift action to tackle weaknesses so that the quality of teaching is now good and children are making strong progress.
- Teaching is good because staff are planning activities that enable children to learn through play and in structured situations. They are encouraged to experiment and explore, using different materials in different environments, both independently and with each other. For example, in one observed lesson, groups of pupils were learning about money in different ways. One group was becoming more familiar with the appearance of coins and their various designs by producing paper rubbings with crayon. Another group were adding up low denomination coins to 'buy' items. The most able children were using coins to learn about tens and units.
- Teaching assistants provide strong support to children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This support ensures that children are able to make comparable progress with their peers. For example, before the whole class reads a story such as 'The Gingerbread Man', the teaching assistants do some tailored work with pupils in advance. This might include reading the story on a one-to-one basis and helping to pick out the main points. It might also include baking a gingerbread man to heighten engagement.
- Staff are able to meet children's needs because assessment is accurate and robust. Children are not only assessed on entry to establish starting points but also on an ongoing basis.
- The wide range of work produced in children's learning journals shows that they make strong progress towards their early learning goals over time. For example, the work of one child showed strong progress in writing. Although she was only able to make marks in September, by March she was using phonics to construct words within sentences.
- Staff have established good relationships with parents. This is because parents are invited to be involved in their child's learning. For example, brief reports are sent home



each week in the 'celebration book'. These reports outline for parents, using a combination of text and photographs, what children have been doing at school. They also encourage children and their parents to complete tasks together at home.

- Transition arrangements are in place to ensure that children have a smooth start when they join the school. However, not all feeder pre-schools currently participate in the same transition activities. Leaders are taking action to ensure that all feeder institutions benefit from the same common experience.

## School details

Unique reference number	126388
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10000533

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	112
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Campbell
Headteacher	Lisa Portch
Telephone number	01747 870675
Website	<a href="http://www.st-johntisbury.wilts.sch.uk">http://www.st-johntisbury.wilts.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@st-johntisbury.wilts.sch.uk">admin@st-johntisbury.wilts.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	2–3 November 2011

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about additional funding for disadvantaged pupils on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- St John's CofE Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2015.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- The number of girls in the school is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who receive support is well above the national average.
- The number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well above average.

## Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector observed learning in lessons with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, middle leaders and the early years coordinator. Additionally, the lead inspector had discussions with pupils, representatives of the governing body, the school improvement adviser and a representative of the local authority.
- The lead inspector scrutinised a wide range of documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation, school development plan, governing body minutes and school improvement adviser notes of visit. Additionally, attendance, behaviour and safeguarding records were also considered.
- The lead inspector scrutinised pupils' work and observed their conduct at break and lunchtimes.

## Inspection team

Steve Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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